

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LAGOS 06809 211740Z

43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 NSC-10 RSR-01 RSC-01 /046 W

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R 211550Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 721

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 6809

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NI

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT NIXON'S LETTER TO GENERAL GOWON

REF: LAGOS 6582

1. TODAY I PRODDED MEA COMMISSIONER OKOI ARIKPO RE ANSWER TO LETTER DELIVERED ONE WEEK AGO. HE SERIOUSLY RESPONDED: "ALL IS WELL; ALL WE NEED IS A DATE." I GENTLY REMINDED HIM THAT WITHOUT AN ANSWER THERE CAN BE NO DISCUSSION OF A DATE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED AS MUCH BUT SAID "I THOUGHT JOE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH YOU," IMPLYING THAT PERMANENT SECRETARY IYALLA HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO ACCOMPLISH SOME UNSTATED END. I ASSURED HIM THAT THE PERMANENT SECRETARY HAD NOT BEEN IN TOUCH AND STATED BLUNTLY THAT WE SEEMED TO BE HEADED IN SAME DIRECTION AS 1971 NEGOTIATION ON THE SAME SUBJECT, AND THAT A SIMPLE ANSWER IS THE ONE ACT NECESSARY TO START AN EXCHANGE. HE REPLIED THAT 1971 WAS DIFFERENT: "WE ARE SERIOUS." HE THEN INVITED ME TO VISIT HIM AT HIS RESIDENCE TOMORROW NIGHT (1800 GMT AUGUST 22). I ACCEPTED.

2. COMMENT: STANDARD, EXPECTED NIGERIANISM AT WORK. IT IS NEVER EASY FOR ANYONE TRYING TO DO BUSINESS. WE WILL SEE WHAT TOMORROW BRINGS.
REINHARDT

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